

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SNM-02 L-02 PM-03 MC-02 H-02 DODE-00

NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-07 AID-05

COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 DEAE-00 JUSE-00 /064 R

DRAFTED BY EA/TB - CLSTERMER:GBROBERTS:MFG

APPROVED BY EA - RHMILLER

S/NM - MR. ERNST

L - MR. ROH

PM/MC - MR. FEMINELLA

H - MR. SCHNEE

DOD/ISA - LTCOL. KING (INFO)

EA/RA - COL. BAILEY

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R 102244Z APR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

S E C R E T STATE 082255

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MASS, BM

SLBJECT: PROPOSED BURMESE PURCHASE OF ARMORED CARS

REF: RANGOON 832

1. THE DEPARTMENT HAS CAREFULLY REVIEWED ALL THE FACTORS BEARING ON OUR ORIGINAL DECISION NOT TO GRANT A LICENSE FOR THE EXPORT OF CADILLAC GAGE ARMORED CARS TO BURMA. WE HAVE PAID PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL FEELING ON HUMAN RIGHTS, THE APPARENT PRIMARY RIOT-CONTROL PURPOSE OF THESE CARS, AND INCREASING CONCERN OVER U.S. ARMS EXPORT POLICY. WE HAVE FURTHER NOTED THE AVAILABILITY OF OTHER ITEMS ON FAVORABLE TERMS IN WHICH THE BURMESE HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST, BURMA'S OWN
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STRONG AND INDEPENDENT MOTIVATIONS IN NARCOTICS CONTROL,

AND THE POSSIBILITY OF OUR MAKING SOME HELPFUL GESTURES IN OTHER AREAS. THE EMBASSY'S VIEWS ALSO HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY WEIGHED. AS A RESULT OF THIS REVIEW, OUR DECISION NOT TO GRANT THE LICENSE STILL STANDS.

2. THE EMBASSY (AS WELL AS THE BURMESE) IS PROBABLY ALREADY AWARE THROUGH THE MEDIA OF THE GROWING INTEREST OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS OVER THE LINKS BETWEEN HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES AND U.S. ARMS EXPORT POLICY. WE HAVE BEEN CRITICIZED FOR ARMING REPRESSIVE REGIMES AND FOR LETTING

POWER POLITICS PREVAIL OVER CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. REALISM OFTEN DICTATES THAT SUCH CRITICISM SIMPLY HAS TO BE BORNE, BUT IN THE CASE OF BURMA THERE SEEMS TO BE NO GREATER OR MORE PRESSING INTEREST TO BE SERVED WHICH WOULD WARRANT SETTING HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS ASIDE. CONGRESS HAS PAID INCREASING ATTENTION TO SUCH CONSIDERATIONS, AND IN THIS PARTICULAR INSTANCE WE WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE THIS SORT OF ATTENTION HAVE A POSSIBLE HARMFUL SPILLOVER EFFECT ON OUR ANTI-NARCOTIC EFFORTS IN BURMA.

3. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THIS LICENSE REFUSAL WILL BE A BITTER PILL FOR THE BURMESE. WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THE PERSONAL NATURE OF THE REGIME AND THE SPECIAL VALUE OF THE MARCH 28 BREAKTHROUGH WITH COLONEL TIN OO. HOWEVER, WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE EMBASSY COULD USE A DIFFERENT CHANNEL TO TELL OF THE ARMORED CAR TURNDOWN AND CHOOSE WHATEVER OTHER CHANNEL WHICH MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE TO PASS OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION OF THE AVAILABILITY OF THE T-33'S. (DOD IS CURRENTLY OBTAINING ADDITIONAL DATA ON THE COSTS INVOLVED IN RECONFIGURING THESE AIRCRAFT AT THE DAO'S REQUEST.) THE EMBASSY COULD ALSO LET THE BURMESE KNOW OF THE AVAILABILITY THROUGH S/NM FUNDS OF NARCOTIC TRACKER EQUIPMENT AND AERIAL SURVEY AIRCRAFT WHICH WE COULD PROVIDE THE BURMESE AT NO COST TO THEM.

4. WE KNOW THIS SITUATION PRESENTS THE EMBASSY WITH SPECIAL PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, THE CLOSE US-GUB NARCOTICS RELATIONSHIP, OUR OPEN DISCUSSION WITH BURMESE OFFICIALS OF THE SSA PROPOSAL, NE WIN'S VISIT TO OUR BOOK EXHIBIT,
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AND OUR WILLINGNESS TO BE HELPFUL IN SEVERAL OTHER IMPORTANT AREAS INDICATE TO US THAT THAT US-GUB UNDERSTANDING IS MATURE ENOUGH SO THAT OCCASIONAL BUMPY EPISODES CAN BE ENDURED WITHOUT UPSETTING THE OVERALL RELATIONSHIP.

5. IN KEEPING WITH OUR ORIGINAL SCENARIO, WE PLAN TO INFORM CADILLAC GAGE OF THE LICENSE DENIAL TWO DAYS

AFTER THIS TELEGRAM IS SENT. KISSINGER

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NNN

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